

In the Claims

Claims 1, 13, 19, 20, 24 and 27 have been amended.

1. (Currently amended) A container comprising:

a body having an interior, an exterior, a sidewall and a top opening;

a lid having a first end hingedly connected to said body and a second end, said lid being shiftable between a closed position covering said top opening and an open position allowing access to the interior;

a fastener for holding said lid in said closed position; and

a gravity-operated actuator for shifting said fastener between a securing and a releasing position;

wherein said gravity-operated actuator comprises:

a weight mounted on said body exterior for movement between a first position and a second position with respect to said sidewall; and

a link having a first end pivotally attached to said fastener ~~at said first end~~ and said link having a second end pivotally attached to said weight ~~at a second end~~;

wherein said fastener pivots between said securing position and said releasing ~~positions~~ position in response to said weight pivoting between said first position and said second position.

2. (Original) The container of claim 1 wherein said sidewall includes a fastener support, and said fastener comprises a latch pivotally mounted on said fastener support and having a first end comprising a hook and a second end.

3. (Original) The container of claim 2 wherein said link is attached to said fastener at said second end.
4. (Original) The container of claim 3 wherein said lid includes a projection engagable by said hook.
5. (Original) The container of claim 1 wherein said weight has a body portion and a head portion connected to said body portion and is pivotally mounted for rotation about a pivot point on said body portion spaced apart from said head portion.
6. (Original) The container of claim 5 wherein said container includes first and second stops on said side wall for limiting pivotal movement of said weight.
7. (Original) The container of claim 6 wherein said rigid link is pivotally connected to said weight body portion.
8. (Original) The container of claim 1 wherein said top opening lies in a plane and wherein said fastener remains in said securing position until the plane of said top opening is generally vertical.
9. (Original) The container of claim 1 wherein said weight is pivotally mounted on said sidewall and includes a pivot point.

10. (Original) The container of claim 9 wherein said weight includes a narrow end and a wide end and said pivot point is located on said narrow end.

11. (Original) The container of claim 10 wherein said rigid link is connected to said weight near said narrow end.

12. (Original) The container of claim 2 wherein said rigid link is pivotally connected to said latch second end.

13. (Currently Amended) A container adapted to be moved from a rest orientation to a dump orientation during a dumping operation comprising:

a body having an interior and a top opening into said interior;

a lid having a first end hingedly connected to said body and shiftable between a closed position covering said top opening and an open position allowing access to the interior;

said container having a first angular orientation with respect to the ground when said container is in a rest orientation and a second angular orientation with respect to the ground when said container is in said dump orientation;

a fastener pivotably mounted on said body at a first point for holding said lid in said closed position and substantially preventing movement of said lid when pressure is applied against said lid from said interior;

and an actuator for shifting said fastener between a securing and a releasing position;

wherein said actuator comprises:

a weight pivotably mounted on said body at a second point for movement ~~to~~ from a first position with respect to said sidewall when said container has a said first angular orientation with respect to the ground and to a second position with respect to said sidewall when said container has a said second angular orientation with respect to the ground;

and a link connected between said weight and said fastener for transferring substantially all motion of said weight to said fastener.

14. (Original) The container of claim 13 wherein said weight shifts from said first position to said second position when said container assumes a third angular orientation with respect to the ground.

15. (Previously amended) The container of claim 13 wherein said weight shifts from said second position to said first position when said container assumes a fourth angular orientation with respect to the ground.

16. (Original) The container of claim 15 wherein said fourth angular orientation is between said first angular orientation and said third angular orientation.

17. (Original) The container of claim 14 wherein said third angular orientation is greater than or equal to 90 degrees.

18. (Original) The container of claim 13 wherein said weight is bi-stably mounted on said container.

19. (Currently amended) A method of latching and unlatching a container by changing the orientation of the container with respect to the ground comprising the steps of:

- providing a container having a lid;
- providing a fastener shiftable between a first position for securing said lid to said container and a second position for releasing said lid;
- mounting a weight on said container exterior to pivot between first and second positions in response to changes in the orientation of said container;
- coupling said weight to said fastener; and
- pivoting said container in a first direction until said weight shifts from said first position to said second position, said weight remaining in said first position until said container is pivoted at least 5 degrees in said first direction;
- wherein the movement of said weight from said first position to said second position causes said link to apply a force to said fastener thereby releasing said lid.

20. (Currently amended) A gravity-operated actuator for shifting a container lid latch between a latching position and an unlatching position, said actuator comprising:

- a weight pivotably connected to ~~the~~ an exterior of a container at a first point on said weight for movement between a first position and a second position with respect to the container; and

a link pivotably connected to a second point on said weight, said link connecting said weight to the container lid latch;

wherein said fastener is shifted from said latching position to said unlatching position when said weight pivots at said first pivotal connection point with said container and said weight pivots at said second points pivotal connection point with said link, said weight thereby pivoting from said first position to said second position.

21. (Original) The actuator of claim 20 wherein said weight has a body portion and a head portion connected to said body portion and is pivotally mounted for rotation about a pivot point on said body portion spaced apart from said head portion.

22. (Original) The container of claim 20 wherein said weight includes a narrow end and a wide end and said pivot point is located on said narrow end.

23. (Original) The container of claim 22 wherein said rigid link is connected to said weight near said narrow end.

24. (Currently amended) A container comprising:

a body having an interior, an exterior, a sidewall and a top opening;

a lid having a first end hingedly connected to said body and a second end, said lid being shiftable between a closed position covering said top opening and an open position allowing access to the interior;

a fastener for holding said lid in said closed position; and

a gravity-operated actuator for shifting said fastener between a securing position and a releasing position;

wherein said gravity-operated actuator comprises:

a weight mounted on said body exterior having a body portion and a head portion connected to said body portion and is pivotally mounted for rotation about a pivot point between a first position and a second position, said body portion being spaced apart from said head portion; and,

a link connecting said weight to said fastener;

wherein said fastener is shifted from said securing position to said releasing position when said weight shifts from said first position to said second position.

25. (Previously added) A container comprising:

a body;

a lid connected to said body, said lid having an open and a closed position;

a fastener having a securing position for retaining said lid in said closed position and a releasing position for releasing said lid;

a weight attached to an exterior of said body; and

a link connecting said weight to said fastener,

wherein rotating said body from a first position to a second position causes said weight to pivot about a first point and apply a force to said link causing said fastener to pivot about a second point so that said fastener moves from said securing position to said releasing position thereby releasing said lid.

26. (Previously added) A container comprising:

a body;

a lid connected to said body, said lid having an open and a closed position;

a fastener connected to said body at a first point on said fastener, said fastener having a securing position for retaining said lid in said closed position and a releasing position for releasing said lid;

a weight attached to an exterior of said body; and

a link connected to said fastener at a second point on said fastener, said link connecting said weight to said fastener,

wherein rotating said body from a first horizontal position to a second angular position causes said weight to apply a force to said link causing said fastener to pivot about said first and second points so that said fastener moves from said securing position to said releasing position thereby releasing said lid.

27. (Currently amended) A container comprising:

a body having a base;

a lid connected to said body, said lid having an open and closed position;

a fastener having a securing position for retaining said lid in said closed position and a releasing position for releasing said lid;

an actuator for shifting said fastener between said securing and said releasing positions;

wherein said actuator comprises:

a weight mounted on an exterior of said body; and,

a link connecting said weight to said fastener;

said fastener remaining in said secured position until said base is rotated to an angle of about 90 degrees relative to a horizontal plane, further rotation of said base past 90 degrees causes said weight to shift from a first position to a second position thereby applying a force to said link causing said fastener to move from said ~~secured~~ securing position to said ~~released~~ releasing position and allowing said lid to open.